

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2014

President Fraim called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. with the following members present: Ms. Green, Mr. Protogyrou, Mr. Riddick, Mr. Smigiel, Dr. Whibley, Ms. Williams and Mr. Winn.

School Board present: Dr. Kirk Houston, chair, Noelle Gabriel, MD, Mr. Rodney Jordan, Ms. Courtney Doyle, Dr. Brad Robinson, Rev. Edward Haywood. Dr. Warren Stewart was absent.

Present Fraim welcomed members of the School Board to the joint meeting. Chairman Houston offered opening remarks and called on Superintendent Samuel King to provide a report to Council.

Dr. King noted the following:

- Pre-tests were given in all SOL courses to assess readiness to learn, students then grouped by identified areas of need and retested followed by an assessment for mastery of first quarter curriculum; students again grouped and retested and will conduct another assessment this month.
- Leadership support efforts were reviewed.
- The DeJong-Richter facilities study; findings and recommendations are due February 28, 2014.
- The present operating budget was reviewed and next year's budget priorities were presented and included reading and math specialists at all elementary and middle schools, safety nets and enrichment support at all schools and competitive compensation and open campus high school programming.
- A preliminary budget gap is estimated at \$13.7 million caused largely by reduction in estimated revenue and an increase in mandatory benefits.

Mayor Fraim asked what the number is in regards to pupil/teacher ratios. In response, Dr. Thornton stated for elementary the average pupil/teacher ratio for K-5 is approximately 18:1. There are some schools because of the state class size reduction for K-3 it is 16:1. At the secondary level, middle school is about 16.5:1. The high school is about 19-20:1.

Vice Mayor Williams asked if every school has a nurse. In response, Dr. Thornton stated that unfortunately every individual school does not have a dedicated RN, but that is the goal.

Councilman Riddick asked in regards to the buses if they leased them or if they buy them. In response, Dr. Thornton stated that they purchase them.

Councilman Riddick asked how long they keep them before they are replaced. In response, Dr. Thornton stated that the State recommends a replacement cycle of about 15 years.

Vice Mayor Williams asked if the new buses have seat belts. In response, Dr. Thornton stated that it's an option and it's not required.

Councilwoman Green asked how the Camp Young Facility programs work from an instructional standpoint. Answer: Camp Young is utilized as an instructional satellite facility for all 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 7th grade students in the Title I facility and they each have the opportunity to spend as much as two weeks at camp rotating through the different literacy centers that are tied into science literacy as well as math literacy. It is funded with Title I dollars and is used as an instructional satellite facility.

Councilman Protogyrou asked what is the understanding of the significance of the Pre-K, which in November you came to us with the idea of \$4.5 million to take 600 children off the waiting list. He asked if they need Council to vote on it to tell them to make it happen.

In response, Dr. Houston stated that they all know and understand that that's a great need and an important piece to student success in this city. There are other competing items as well when you look at the five-year outlook in terms of costs and need and areas of technology, special development, enrichment and was what we're seeking to do is crystallize the prioritization of these.

Councilman Riddick asked in regards to hard to fill schools, who controls that you or the teacher that you're trying to put in there. When I say you, I mean the administration. In response, Dr. King stated that the discussions as of now centers on what we call the best fit for a school because you should be expected to assign educators to schools based on their readiness for the school. For example, if you are a new graduate from college, did you have pre-service experience that will prepare you to begin to address the needs that some of our schools will present like children with gaps that relate to phonemic awareness or lack of letter/number recognition. So if you didn't have that in your pre-service experiences then that might possible not be a good candidate for that particular school so that changes the way that we do our work in terms of building a pool of highly qualified candidates because they have to be ready to deliver those services.

Councilman Riddick asked how does a student get to VO-TECH. In response, Dr. King stated that they have maintained Norfolk Technical Center and it has various pathways to accomplish that. We also have examples of some of the sample programs that remain in the traditional high schools to accomplish that. Each of the high schools have more concentrated or specialized programs unique to leadership or mechanics or some type of scientific field. Those opportunities are open to all students and then any adults who take advantage of those opportunities during the evening. Middle school students have the opportunity to experience those in very limited fashion through the exploratory or the connections classes that are currently available at our middle school level.

Councilman Riddick asked if we still have night school. ANSWER: Yes.

Councilwoman Whibley asked if the data supports Pre-K. In response, Dr. King stated that the data around early learning is clear in terms of what it means.

Councilwoman Whibley stated that the data clearly demonstrates that those children that have Pre-K are doing well in kindergarten but does that advancement continue when they're in fourth and fifth grade? In response, Mr. Jordan stated that he thinks Dr. King is answering from the overarching perspective of what research shows in terms of investment in Pre-K. I think as a former School Board member that you probably look at data the way I look at data where we need to see children we currently have in Pre-K and look at our on-time graduation rate as being able to track whether or not the children going through our Pre-K, as they progress through the system, how are we seeing the outcomes on the other end.

A. GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPDATE

Bryan Pennington, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, reported:

- Flooding legislation passed the Senate and House Rules Committee and appears to be in good shape
- The Charter bill is proceeding towards passage.
- The bill to increase School Board terms is on the way to passing.
- Transportation
 - Mr. Pennington reported that Delegate Chris Stolle introduced a bill that essentially set priorities for highway construction spending across Virginia. In this bill, HB2, it's telling regional transportation districts to take the state allocations and then prioritize those projects based on factors such as congestion, relief, economic development, public safety, etcetera. He noted that HRTPO has already done a lot of this work as a regional body and as a matter of fact, Delegate Stolle referenced the work that the HRTPO as a place to start with application that could be applied statewide. HB2, if it passes as drafted, will give local governments like Norfolk more of a say on the ranking and weighing of the criteria by the district and it will also allow the different regions that have different needs to be able to place whatever their elected leadership feels are the most important factors in determining how to proceed on transportation projects.
 - Next is a bill in the HRTPO Legislative Package as well as the City of Norfolk's carried by Senator Wagner essentially asking the Commonwealth to study transportation funding. Unfortunately, SJ72 was left in Committee.
 - Two bills - SB513 and HB1253 would create the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission. This bill is important to Norfolk and Hampton Roads because it would create the framework for the region to accomplish a number of things that it currently can't accomplish just as the HRTPO. For instance, this commission could become a qualified PPTA; it could become a bond issuer; it could be a tolling authority. It really is trying to mirror a lot of legislation that already exists in Northern Virginia. It has the goal to put some of the decision-making back into the hands of the regional leaders to determine how we spend precious and few transportation dollars.

- There are bills being considered to defer the Opportunity Education Institute, to address mental health care deficiencies and to repeal authority for red light cameras – which has been defeated.

B. COUNCIL INTERESTS

1. Councilman Riddick a) expressed concern that HRT did not run the bus routes on the third day following the snowstorm, noting that the bus shelters were blocked or barricaded by the snow and b) noted the letter that he wrote to Governor McAuliffe and copied Council regarding a cash lane on the Mid-Town and Downtown Tunnels to benefit individuals who go back and forth every once in a while and that he would like to have a Resolution drawn up to push forward to see what can be done as far as including a cash line while the construction is going on.
2. With respect to the snow removal and HRT bus service concerns, Vice Mayor Williams stated that perhaps the city could coordinate snow removal with the HRT bus routes at a shared cost or look at how we can do it better in the future and also find out who is responsible for the bus shelters. She also noted a) that we have a hometown hero who was part of the Super Bowl team and noted that she spoke with the City Clerk about working with Norfolk Public Schools to do a parade or a key to the city or some kind of city recognition for Kam Chancellor; b) asked Council to take another look at the Senior Tax Relief Program during budget discussions; and c) asked if they can get future school board presentations in the Dropbox.
3. Councilman Smigiel echoed the aforementioned comments by the Vice Mayor regarding the Senior Tax Relief Program. He also a) expressed concern with speeding on Broadfield and Portal Roads and b) asked if the city can incorporate an auto-dialer system similar to the school system to contact Norfolk citizens when we have inclement weather events, reschedule trash/recycle pick-up or other events to keep citizens informed.

C. MID YEAR UPDATE- CONTINUED

Sabrina Joy-Hogg, Assistant City Manager, reported:

- Regarding compensation, the plan of action for Attraction, Retention, Motivation and Development (ARMD) is proposed to be implemented over a four year period with a total cost of \$6.9 million or \$6.5 million depending on the scenario implemented.

D. STANBY BOND PURCHASING AGREEMENT

Alice Kelly, Director of Finance, reported:

- There is a need to replace current agreements and benefits for the current Standby Bond Purchase Agreement.
- The recommendation is to adopt an ordinance to accomplish this.

F. REGIONAL WASTEWATER SYSTEM CONSOLIDATION PROPOSAL

Kristen Lentz, Director of Utilities, reported on the hybrid sewer consolidation plan proposal that has been developed between Hampton Roads Sanitation and local governments. Under the plan, HRSD would assume responsibility for developing and implementing a Regional Wet Weather Management Plan, making improvements to localities' systems at HRSD expense and dedicate ownership to the localities.

Rates will increase regardless of approval of the plan; EPA and DEQ have reviewed the Agreement and agree with it. Staff recommends Council approve an ordinance authorizing the City Manager to execute the MOA at its February 28th meeting and will be more cost effective for Norfolk residents.

G. CLOSED SESSION

Motion for closed session was approved for purposes which are set out in **Clause (s) 7** of subsection **(A)** of **Section 2.2-3711** of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, as amended:

- (7) Consultation with legal counsel and briefing by staff members, consultants, or attorneys pertaining to one legal matter regarding 161 Granby Street.

Yes: Green, Protogyrou, Riddick, Smigiel, Whibley, Williams Winn and Frain.

No: None.